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Ninagawa's Types of Japanese Pottery

IN the early half of last year a very interesting collection of pottery was exhibited in one of the wall cases in the gallery of Japanese pottery. These objects were temporarily removed from the main collection and represented nearly all of the original specimens figured in the first systematic work on Japanese pottery ever published in Japan by a native author. This man was Ninagawa Noritane, a distinguished antiquarian of Tokyo, formerly of Kyoto, who planned an extensive work on matters relating to the old things of Japan. In 1876 he began a work under the general title of Japanese Arts and Industries. The work on Japanese pottery consisted of seven parts and a number of unpublished plates and drawings which, had he lived, would have formed Part VIII of the work.

In the general series he published one part on the various gateways of the Castle of Yedo illustrated by small photographs. Plates had been made for a part on ancient roofing tiles. Ninagawa showed me the drawings of a part on Japanese armor which he intended to publish. The plates represented a succession of figures, the first one clothed in an undergarment and then, in sequence, the same figure was shown with a garment added until the man was represented in full armor.*

While interested in all departments of antiquity Ninagawa was specially devoted to Japanese pottery. After his death in 1882 his notes, memoranda, unpublished plates and his private annotated copy of his work on Japanese pottery came into my possession. His correspondence indicated extensive travelling, and wherever he visited he hunted up some old antiquarian or potter and made inquiries about the old potters of the village. He also corresponded with many antiquarians in various parts of the country.

In forming the great collection of Japanese pottery, I made special efforts to secure as many as possible of the originals figured by Ninagawa in his work. This antiquarian was my first teacher in the art of pottery identification and from him I secured a number of the original objects figured in Parts VI and VII. The originals figured in Parts II, III, IV and V had been bought and carried to Europe before I reached Japan. There was no hope of ever securing these, so an attempt was made to get objects as near like as possible to those originally figured. These were in every case submitted to Ninagawa for his approval. In a number of instances better objects were secured than Ninagawa had figured. In a few instances I got the mate to the one figured, as in the case of the Takatori wine bottle: Cat. No. 1089.

In 1883 I returned from Japan by way of

China and Europe, and, passing through Paris, visited the great connoisseur, Mr. Bing, and secured a number of marks that in Japan I had searched for in vain. On arriving in London I learned, for the first time, that Mr. Bing had been the purchaser of the originals of Parts II, III, IV and V of Ninagawa's work. Though a number of European museums were endeavoring to secure these types, by good fortune the precious objects came into my possession and the pieces are to be found in their respective places in the Museum collection.

Ninagawa's work on pottery was entitled *Kwan Ko Dzu Setsu*; the literal translation of these four characters is "*Study, Old, Illustration, Explain, or Discourse*," a free translation of which might be, *Illustrated Discourse on Ancient Objects*.

This work was made up of seven parts, oblong in shape, measuring $15\frac{1}{2}$ by $10\frac{3}{4}$ inches. These were illustrated by lithographic plates colored by hand, and though roughly done are almost perfect in the depiction of the pieces figured. Part I was published in 1876, Parts II, III, IV and V in 1877, Part VI bore the date of 1879, and Part VII appeared in 1880. The objects figured in Part I were never owned by Ninagawa; Figs. 1-15 were copied from drawings of objects exhumed from a mound at Kamiyama, in Yamato, and were reburied after having been drawn; others were in the National Museum, or in the possession of some shrine or temple. The Museum collection, however, contains objects of a similar nature to those figured.

The objects figured in Parts II, III, IV and V are the most important of all, and of 121 pieces figured the Museum possesses 114. In Parts VI and VII were figured a few pieces of porcelain and a number of others new and of no merit. The Museum Collection possesses eleven originals of Part VI, and ten originals of Part VII. The British Museum possesses nine originals of these two parts, which were secured by the British Minister, Sir Harry Parkes, who was in Japan at the time of their publication. A few other types were got by Dr. William Anderson, of London, and Thomas Allen, Esq., of Boston. With few exceptions, however, our collection possesses potteries and marks similar to those figured.

The accompanying illustration is from a photograph taken of the collection before redistributing the objects in their appropriate places in the main collection. E. S. M.

Gallery Conferences.

THE Series of Conferences named below are in progress in the Galleries of the Museum on Thursdays.

Admission to these Conferences is free, but the ticket of admission does not exempt the holder from paying admission to the Museum.

These tickets may be had by applying in writing

* In the Japanese Ethnological Collection in the Peabody Museum, Salem, Mass., is a life-sized figure which I had made for the Museum while in Japan. This figure is dressed in complete armor, the work being done by an armorer belonging to the Imperial family.



to Mr. Huger Elliott, Supervisor of Educational Work, Room 1 at the Museum. Tickets for all the Conferences will not be issued to an applicant at one time. Applicants are requested to specify the Conferences they desire to hear in the order of their preference, and tickets to the seating capacity of the gallery will be issued weekly.

The Conferences begin at 2:30 P.M. and it is urged that the audience be seated at that hour.

January 23. A Masterpiece from the pottery of Hieron, Athens. Mr. Lacey Davis Caskey. Fifth Century Room.

January 30. Lacquer. Mr. Francis Stewart Kershaw. Japanese Print Room.

February 6. Art Handwork of Japan. Professor Edward Sylvester Morse. Lecture Hall.

February 13. Household Art of Japan. Professor Edward Sylvester Morse. Lecture Hall.

February 20. Pottery and Porcelain. Miss Florence Virginia Paull. Forecourt Room.

February 27. Beginnings of Popular Art in Japan. Mr. Francis Gardner Curtis. Trustees' Room.

March 6. Tapestries. Miss Sarah Gore Flint. Tapestry Gallery.

March 13. Subject to be announced. Mr. Francis Stewart Kershaw.

March 20. Prints. Subject to be announced. Mr. FitzRoy Carrington. In the Print Study Room.

March 27. Greek Vases recently purchased from the Bartlett Fund. Mr. Arthur Fairbanks. Lecture Hall.

Department of Paintings

Special Exhibitions

AN exhibition of the work of Miss Emily Burling Waite, holder of the Paige Travelling Scholarship of the Museum School for 1910-1912, was held in the Renaissance Court from January 1st to 12th. The exhibition included thirty-eight canvases, among them five copies after Rubens, Velasquez and others.

An exhibition of paintings and drawings by Albert Besnard (b. 1849) was opened in the Renaissance Court on Monday, January 20th, by a private view to the Annual Subscribers to the Museum, and will continue until about February 15. The catalogue (sent postpaid for fifteen cents) contains a brief sketch of M. Besnard and his work by M. Jean Guiffrey, Curator of the Department of Paintings. The exhibition includes portraits, genre subjects, landscapes, Eastern scenes, pastels, sketches and cartoons for mural decorations in public buildings in Paris and elsewhere, drawings, engravings and two frames of leaves from notebooks of M. Besnard's journeys in Egypt and India. M. Philip Besnard, son of the artist, contributes a marble bust of his father. The exhibition has been gathered from a number of sources in Paris and this country, and will later be shown in other American cities.

Recent Additions to the Department of Classical Art

SIXTY objects recently purchased from the Francis Bartlett Fund have been placed on exhibition temporarily in three cases in the gallery of the Classical Court. The collection includes twenty-one vases; sixteen terra-cotta heads and a fragment of a terra-cotta plaque; fifteen gems—Greek, Roman, and Hellenistic—and a fragment of a glass cameo; a small marble head; an engraved bronze mirror; a bronze Corinthian capital; a lead theatre ticket with figures of Harmodius and Aristogeiton copied from the group of the Tyrannicides by Critius and Nesiotes; and two coins, an electrum stater of Cyzicus, and a silver dekadrachm (about 500 B. C.) of the Derrones, Macedon.

The vases are of remarkable excellence, unsurpassed by any accession of the Greek potter's and decorator's art in previous years. With three exceptions all are red-figured, and the scenes represented are unusually interesting. Of chief importance is the large skyphos in the central case, signed by Hieron, the potter, and by Makron, the painter. On one side is shown Paris leading away Helen; on the other, Helen meeting Menelaus. In each group the figures are distinguished by name. The beauty of the lekythoi is noteworthy as regards both form and decoration; the two Athenian white lekythoi are especially fine in drawing.

The terra-cotta heads from Southern Italy belong to the fifth century B. C., and represent an expression of Greek art not well illustrated hitherto in the Museum. These objects will be more fully discussed in later numbers of the Bulletin.

Special Exhibition of Eighteenth and Nineteenth Century Pottery and Porcelain

ASPECIAL exhibition of European pottery and porcelain drawn from the reserve collection of the Museum, augmented by loans, was opened in the Forecourt Room on Monday, February 3, and will continue during February and March.

An effort has been made to show examples of the English pottery which was so extensively used in this country in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. A few pieces of English Lowestoft, shown side by side with the Oriental porcelain until recently called by that name, will be interesting and instructive to collectors.

A comparison of Wedgwood's work with that of his imitators, except, perhaps, Adams, shows how far short of the delicacy and perfection of Wedgwood's designs they all come.

The specimens of later Sèvres include a coffee set of egg-shell porcelain presented to the Museum by a Committee of the Fair for the Relief of Sufferers in France in 1871. The set is decorated with delicately painted medallions representing the fountains and gardens at St. Cloud.

The figurines include examples from Meissen and